



NEWS RELEASE
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Four SOF service members killed in Afghanistan

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BAGRAM AIR FIELD, AFGHANISTAN – In a somber Memorial Day ceremony today, the Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force – Afghanistan honored four service members who were killed this Saturday in southern Afghanistan.

Killed in action were three soldiers, Capt. Daniel W. Eggers, a Special Forces detachment commander; Pvt. 1st Class Joseph A. Jeffries, a psychological operations specialist; Staff Sgt. Robert J. Mogensen, a Special Forces weapons sergeant. Petty Officer 1st Class Brian J. Ouellette, a U.S. Navy SEAL, was also killed in action.

About 300 members of the CJSOTF-A stood in formation under a flag at half-mast. The command sergeant major called roll call. While several answered “present,” four representatives answered on behalf of fellow service members who could not answer, echoing – “killed in action.”

“They didn’t back down from trouble,” the CJSOTF-A commander said of the warriors who spotted and tracked anti-coalition forces before rolling over a mine in their vehicle. “They put their lives on the line so our families can live in peace.”

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The honored service members cherished their families, said friends. Jeffries, a newlywed, was known to light up a room when he entered.

“He wore a smile like it was part of his uniform,” said Jeffries’ commander citing from a group eulogy compiled by his fellow PSYOP troops. “(His wife) meant more to him than anything. He was excited to be a husband and more excited to be a dad. We’ll miss our brother always -- but he will always be in our hearts and minds.”

The SEALs met before the ceremony to reflect on their team mate and refocus on their Afghanistan mission. The SEAL commander held up a piece of metal from the World Trade Center. The commander said Ouellette knew why he was in Afghanistan, as well, to bring security to this nation and rid the country of anti-coalition forces who attacked the WTC on Sept. 11, 2001 and brutalized the Afghan people under Taliban rule.

“Brian was always a professional, whether filling sand bags or guarding the president of the United States,” said the SEAL commander.

The ceremony continued with “Taps,” sharp salutes, prayer, and folding of the Colors. In honor of the special operators, the “Ballad of the Green Berets,” the “Army Song,” and “Navy Song.” ended the ceremony attended by friends, generals and coalition force members.

But the ceremony did not mark an end.

“We stopped today to show honors to these heroes,” said the CJSOTF-A commander who said the “mission continues through great special operators willing to make the ultimate sacrifice.”

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He said that his special operators would continue the fight undeterred. “We will maintain contact with the enemy.”

On Saturday night, special operators returned to the area where the soldiers died and caught the perpetrators off guard. “They fired first , but we fired the last rounds,” the CJSOTF-A commander said.